



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**MALAWI**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## PRESS RELEASE

Press Office: 01 772 455  
Public Information: 01772992  
Email: [ochimenya@usaid.gov](mailto:ochimenya@usaid.gov)  
Web: [www.usaid.gov/where-we-work/africa/malawi](http://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work/africa/malawi)

### **Malawi is stocking enough maize**

**LILONGWE, February 6, 2013;** In late 2012, development partners offered to complete an independent assessment of the Strategic Grain Reserves (SGR) managed by the National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA) to reaffirm the availability of maize stocks sufficient to meet the 2012/13 humanitarian food aid requirements. USAID, as the Chair of the Donor Committee for Agriculture and Food Security, contracted Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS) Malawi Limited to conduct an independent assessment of the quantity and quality of maize in the SGR under custody of NFRA. SGS dispatched two assessment teams, one for SGR locations in Southern Malawi and another team for locations in the central and northern regions. The assessment was undertaken from December 12-23, 2012. Development Partner representatives accompanied the assessment teams to some of the storage sites. NFRA staff provided critical assistance to the team throughout the assessment that included shifting and rotating maize to facilitate the collection of samples from silos and storage locations. The assessment involved forensic examination of records, physical verification of the quantity of maize in designated silos and warehouses and testing of the quality of maize against the agreed seventeen standards generally used by NFRA and the World Food Programme. SGS engaged its internationally accredited laboratory in Mombasa, Kenya as well as the Government of Malawi's Chitedze Research Station to test the quality of maize. Two kilogram samples of maize from each silo/stack were shared with both SGS's Mombasa laboratory and Chitedze Research Station. For the quantity assessment, the team used a combination of methodologies including reviewing of NFRA's Good Received Notes, utilization of a digital fixed scales connected to a conveyer belt when moving maize between silos, and dipping techniques using measuring tapes to subtract the empty space from the dimensions of the silos.

#### **Major Findings**

At the beginning of the assessment, NFRA estimated that it held 86,415.98 MT of maize in the SGR. SGS Limited Malawi reported that 81,575.63 MT of maize was verified as being present and fit for human consumption. An additional 2,910.96 MT was characterized as dust and chaff, which could have formed through multiple years of storage. Through laboratory tests, 410.50 MT was declared unfit for human consumption due to high aflatoxin levels (and has subsequently been removed from the SGR). A number of samples showed results that did not meet more than two of the recommended quality specifications used by the World Food Programme and NFRA. The most common unmet specifications included shriveled, diseased, broken and discolored maize grains. **The final conclusion of the assessment is that the SGR was sufficiently stocked to meet emergency requirements. The Government of Malawi and NFRA are commended for their superb collaboration with the development partners on this important assessment and for their outstanding management of the SGR.** Development Partners hope that the findings of this assessment will assist to implement future improvements in the management of the SGR, and have recommended an annual inspection of the SGR and related storage facilities.

*For more information, please contact Oris Chimanya, USAID/Malawi on 01 772 455 or 0888 991 445.*